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Economic and Social Council

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Organizational session for 2002

Provisional summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 14 January 2002, at 3 p.m.

Temporary President: Mr. Belinga-Eboutou ..... (Cameroon)
President: Mr. Šimonović ..... (Croatia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Temporary President** declared open the organizational session for 2002 of the Economic and Social Council.

Statement by the Temporary President

2. **The Temporary President** thanked the members of the outgoing Bureau for their contribution, which had made it possible to focus on the goals set in the Millennium Declaration. In the case of the Economic and Social Council, those goals concerned four issues. The first, strengthening of the Council, had been achieved through three measures: increasing the Council's visibility, with its participation in the Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Brussels, and in the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban, as well as in several meetings of NGOs and intergovernmental organizations; the historic decision adopted by the General Assembly to consider the Council's annual report in plenary meeting and to allocate the necessary resources to the Bureau of the Council so that it could carry out its activities; and the promotion of greater synergy between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, especially as regards conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction activities.

3. With regard to the second issue, information and communication technologies (ICT), the Council had submitted and disseminated the Ministerial Declaration adopted by the Council in July 2000, for which it had presided over the international symposia on ICT organized in the People's Republic of China and had participated in the Group of Eight forum held in Genoa and in the meeting of the Digital Opportunities Task Force, held in Naples; in addition, it had established and launched the Secretariat working group on ICT recommended in the above-mentioned Ministerial Declaration; and it had been responsible for preparing the international symposium on Africa and ICT, to be held in Yaoundé.

4. Thirdly, relations between the Economic and Social Council and civil society had been consolidated with the granting of consultative status to almost one hundred NGOs. In addition, the Council had encouraged synergies among African NGOs.

5. Fourthly, in relation to the African continent, the 2001 high-level segment had been devoted to the situation in Africa and to the definition of relations between Africa and the United Nations and, in particular, to the establishment of a new North-South association for development cooperation and assistance, promotion of private investment in Africa, access of African products to developed country markets in the context of the new world trade order and affirmation of the economic and social rights of the poorest countries.

Election of the President

6. **The Temporary President** said that, under rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council, in 2002 it was the turn of the Eastern European States group to occupy the post of President. Consequently, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to elect Mr. Ivan Šimonović to the office of President.

7. *Mr. Šimonović (Croatia) was elected President by acclamation.*

8. *Mr. Šimonović took the Chair.*

Statement by the President

9. **The President** said that the current era was one of great advances and opportunities, but also one of unprecedented dangers. The attacks of 11 September had clearly shown that cooperation was essential in order to meet the challenges of the century. Unfortunately, it had also become clear that interdependence was increasing much more rapidly than capacity to cooperate. In that regard, the Economic and Social Council could made a considerable contribution. The Nobel Prize had been awarded to the Secretary-General and to the United Nations in recognition of the work done, but also as a warning that the world needed the Organization. As for the Economic and Social Council, its most important task was to make globalization into a positive force for all. It should also deal with the comprehensive follow-up of all the conferences held and ensure that the decisions adopted there were put into practice. In that connection, two very important meetings would be held in 2002: the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Council should also devote much time and effort to improving coordination between its

functional commissions, the specialized agencies and funds and programmes.

10. With regard to the Council's work, he stressed that the consideration of questions relating to human resources, particularly with regard to health and education in the development process, would be extremely important. As part of the preparations for the high-level segment, three ministerial round tables would be held in February and March and in April there would be a high-level dialogue with the Bretton Woods institutions. In the coordination segment, the Council would be carefully considering the strengthening of its activities.

11. In connection with peace and development, the Council's contribution could be decisive. It could intervene not only to prevent conflicts but also to build peace, by coordinating the delivery of assistance on the ground. In fact, the Council was the organ best able to tackle the underlying causes of conflicts, try to prevent them and promote peace consolidation measures to prevent their recurrence. In that respect, the Council would establish an advisory group on African countries emerging from conflict. The group would focus on the mobilization of resources to be coordinated by the Council in the areas of conflict prevention and peace-building. Although the African continent would be given priority in the programme of work, the Council would also pay due attention to all the world's problems, and that would require better coordination between the work of the Economic and Social Council, the Security Council and the General Assembly.

12. Lastly, the success of the Council's work would be measured not by the number of resolutions that it adopted but by the improvement in the living conditions of people all over the world. In that respect, it would be essential to enlist the support not only of the States Members of the United Nations but also of NGOs, the private sector and academic circles.

Election of the Bureau

13. **The President** said that rule 18 of the rules of procedure specified that the Council should elect four Vice-Presidents. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Council wished to elect the candidates nominated by each regional group.

14. *Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala), Ms. Rasi (Finland), Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) and Mr. Kumalo (South Africa) were elected Vice-Presidents of the Council for 2002 by acclamation.*

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (E/2002/2)

15. **The President** invited the Council to adopt the provisional agenda.

16. *The provisional agenda was adopted.*

17. **The President** announced that, by adopting resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/14, the Council had decided to adopt certain measures designed to revitalize and improve its functioning. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 45/264, 48/162, 50/227 and 52/12 B, had also approved measures designed to restructure and revitalize the Council. On the basis of the guidelines given in those resolutions, the Council would at its organizational session consider the provisional agenda for the regular session (E/2002/2) and the proposed basic programme of work of the Council for 2002 and 2003 (E/2002/1). In addition, the matters listed in the provisional agenda required the adoption of measures at the organizational session.

18. As indicated in paragraph 2 (1) of Council resolution 1988/77, informal consultations would be held on the proposed basic programme of work and other organizational matters. On the basis of those consultations, the Bureau would submit recommendations to the Council at its next meeting.

The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.